(c) whether it is also a fact that mobile services are in operation at some distance from Dakra while it does not work there in the absence of a tower; and

(d) by when, mobiles would start operating in the said area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (d) Sir, for the purpose of providing Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS), Jharkhand is a part of Bihar Telecom Circle Service Area. M/s Reliance Telecom (P) Limited and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) have been granted licences to provide Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS) in Bihar Telecome Circle Service Area.

As per the terms and conditions of the licence for CMTS, an operator for Telecom Circle Service Area is required to cover 10% of District Headquarters in the Service Area within one year and 50% of District Headquarters within three years. The licensee is also permitted to cover any other town in a district in lieu of the District Headquarter, the choice of District Headquarters/towns to be covered and further expansion beyond 50% District Headquarters/towns shall lie with the licensee depending on their business decision. It is not mandatory under the CMTS Licence Agreement to cover 100% of the Service Area.

As intimated by the above mentioned licensees, Dakra is yet to be covered with CMTS. The nearest CMTS Base Transmitter Station to Dakra is of BSNL at Mandar, 40 kilometers away from Dakra. Coverage of Dakra depends upon the business/commercial decision of the said licensees. However, BSNL is presently providing CMTS in 24 cities/towns of Jharkhand which includes all the District Headquarters and has plans to cover Dakra with CMTS during the current financial year.

Shortage of manpower in Parliament House Post Office

†1955. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:

DR. PRABHA THAKUR:

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to excess work and fewer number of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

employees in the post office located in Parliament House, Members of Parliament are facing inconvenience in getting their work done by Standing in the queue;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a number of employees are being reduced in this office and they are being transferred elsewhere; and

(c) if so, the reasons for reducing the staff and ignoring inconvenience being faced by Members of Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF. COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No, Sir. The workload of the office was earlier reviewed. On the basis of review one post of Postal Assistant was found surplus which was redeployed in another needy Post Office. On receipt of subsequent complaint alleging shortage of staff, one additional Postal Assistant has since been provided subject to further review of establishment.

(b) and (c) As indicated in para (a) above one post of Postal Assistant was earlier redeployed. In the meantime, an additional Postal Assistant has been provided in the post office and there is no inconvenience to Member of Parliament.

Cheaper rates for calls abroad

1956. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that calling abroad from cell phone has become cheaper as compared to MTNL and BSNL landline;

(b) if so, what are the comparative rates of State Trunk Dialing/ International Long Distance Tariff as on the 1st July, 2003;

(c) whether it is also a fact that various cell phone/WLL/MTNL/BSNL companies are revising their tariff arbitrarily without consulting TRAI; and

(d) if so, what are the rates applicable as on the 1 st July, 2003 of various companies as per the approval of the TRAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Most of the cellular operators have recently